

# The Presbyterian of the South

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## Editorial Notes & Comment



**S**UNDAY-SCHOOL WORKERS of the First Church, Columbia, S. C., have planned a series of visits to other Sunday Schools. A committee of them is to go to each of several other schools in the city on a visit of observation to find out what they can learn that will help their own school. This is an admirable plan and we recommend it to other schools. We believe it would be better to make these visits unannounced so that the school may be seen in its ordinary "working clothes." Methods that are in every day practical use are what will prove of service to others, rather than those that might be put on with "company manners." This same plan might be extended to other cities. If committees cannot be appointed to visit successful schools elsewhere, opportunity should be taken by Sunday School workers when away from home to attend Sunday School wherever they may be. They should keep their eyes and ears open and carry home every good thing they see or hear. This is what a business man does for his business.

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**M**ISTAKES will creep into the best managed paper sometimes. On the authority of one of our highly esteemed Northern exchanges, we made the statement recently that the Squirrel Inn, of the Bowery Mission, and the Jerry McAuley Mission, in New York, had both been closed on account of the improvement due to prohibition. We thought our source of information was entirely dependable. We have since learned that the Squirrel Inn was closed several years ago, because the property was sold. The Jerry McAuley Mission is still at work, and it is said that it will have much work to do in the future, even in looking after drunks, until the prohibition law is better enforced. A writer from that city says that its enforcement is now farcical, and that drunkenness is very common. We wonder how long the law abiding element of this country is going to allow this law to be flagrantly violated, as it is now in some places.

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**C**ONFERENCES for the consideration of religious subjects have been very popular during recent years in all parts of the country. Some of them are controlled by the churches, some by undenominational organizations, some by individuals or independent associations. Many of these have done great good. But there are so many influences that affect them, especially those not controlled by some church, that there is danger of their being led away from the fundamentals of the truth. One who had attended one of the uncontrolled conferences this past summer expressed her disappointment at its lowered spiritual tone and gave as the reason for it that a number of Jews had begun attending it, that the management "was afraid of the Jews' pocket books," and that therefore nothing was taught which could offend the Jews. The management wanted their money. A valued contemporary mentions another conference which has stood high in the opinion of evangelical Christians, and where the preaching was by

leading men of various denominations. In referring to this conference The Christian Register, the leading Unitarian paper of this country, said that in the preaching there was nothing that the Unitarians could take exception to. This shows the importance the Church controlling the teaching given to her people. The Southern Presbyterian Church is fortunate in having such conferences as are held each summer at Montreat. No one has ever been able to charge any falling away from the truth in the teaching that has been given there, and there is no danger that this will ever be the case under present management. In order that this condition may continue steps should be taken to put Montreat more completely under the ownership and control of the General Assembly. There is a kind of connection existing now, but in the minds of some this is not as close and as strong as it ought to be. It would be well, if all doubt on this subject should be entirely removed.

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**S**OLDIERS enlisting in the United States Army are now being given such advantages as probably no other soldiers ever had. Our Government has learned that a good soldier is not a mere machine, but that in his case, as elsewhere "brains will tell." The War Department is providing for the education of the men, giving them where needed the fundamentals of school education, and it also provides technical and mechanical instruction. The Government does this in order that the man may be a better soldier, and that he may be fitted to be a better citizen when he leaves the army than he was when he entered it. The Government has also learned that moral character is an important element in the soldier. So it is looking after the moral training of the soldiers. Major General P. C. Harris, Adjutant General of the Army, in speaking on this subject called attention to what is being done especially for foreigners who enlist in the army, but practically the same is done for all soldiers. He said: "One of the chief duties of the new corps of chaplains in the army is to give sympathetic aid to the foreign-born and to those who may not be able to protect their own interests. No more valuable service can be rendered to the country than to bring the young foreigner into the army in right mental attitude and to send him back to civilian life with an ambition to serve his new country there as well. The complete success of our whole program can be secured only by so influencing a foreigner's environment, military duty, education, amusements, athletics and religious observances that all combined may favorably react upon his character. So far as it is humanly possible we are as much responsible for the young man's character and habits as we are for his training. We want the best influences to surround him for all 24 hours of his day, and our responsibilities have not ceased until we have made of him not only a first class soldier, but a high-spirited, well-educated American citizen."

**S**ABBATH observance is a very vital question today. There never was a time in this country, when it was more vital. Desecration of the sanctity of the day is becoming more and more common. This is shown among other ways in the number of people of good standing, and some of them members of the Church, who spend the day or a part of it in games and sports. A Christian man said a few days ago, in speaking of men playing golf on Sunday, "My conscience is all right on the subject, but my mind is not. I know it is not right for me to play golf on Sunday, but I cannot give a clear and satisfactory reason why I might not do so, if I wanted to." We would like to have some of our readers to give him a short clear cut reason that he could give to himself and to others why he should not play golf on Sunday. We would like for golf, tennis and baseball players especially to answer his question. We believe that there are many others who would like to have the answer. We hope that our readers who have an opinion on this subject will let us hear from them.

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**L**YING is a serious charge to make against any one, and especially against a professing Christian. A man asked recently, "What do Christians lie about most?" He answered his own question by saying, "About not going to church. Not one excuse in ten given by people for not going to church is true. They would not think of giving such excuses for staying away from business or for not filling a social engagement." Is what this man said true?

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**E**LLIS ISLAND has been in some respects one of the plague spots of America. Through its doors more than three fourths of all the emigrants from other countries enter the United States. They are coming now through that one gateway at the rate of about 15,000 a week, or 750,000 a year. There they first get sight of America and American ways. It is no easy matter to handle such crowds of people from so many countries, speaking so many different languages. From all accounts they have been treated almost as prisoners, and in some respects as animals, during the time of their detention there. Naturally they do not understand their being kept there for several days, as they usually are. And the treatment they receive gives them a bad first impression of this country, and they resent it and hold it in memory for a long time. It is gratifying to see that there are to be decided changes for the better made there under the newly appointed commissioner of immigration. If immigrants are admitted, they should be kindly received when they first put foot on the land that they have chosen for their new home. Kind words and kind treatment at that time will go far towards making them friendly and well disposed to the country and to its government. If this is done there will not be found so many socialists and anarchists developing among them. They should be met there with the gospel also.